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MARTINEAU'S "STUDY OF RELIGION:"

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MARTINEAU'S "STUDY OF RELIGION."

By RICHARD A. ARMSTRONG.

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MARTINEAU'S "STUDY OF RELIGION:"

An Analysis and Appreciation.

By
Richard A. Armstrong.

London:
JAMES CLARKE & CO.,
13 & 14, Fleet Street. 1900.

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First Edition, February, 1900.

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Preface.

JAMES MARTINEAU was born at Norwich on April 21, 1805. He died in London on January 11, 1900.

Twelve years ago, at the age of eighty-two, he published "A Study of Religion." At the request of the then Editor of *The Inquirer*, I contributed to that journal a series of articles constituting, not so much a review, as a brief analysis and exposition of the work. It is these articles which are here collected together, with only such slight variations as the lapse of years and the death of Dr. Martineau make necessary.

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Dr. Martineau has left to the world (besides volumes of sermons famous throughout Christendom, devotional compositions in hymn and canticle and prayer of the rarest beauty and spirituality, collections of essays and addresses in many departments of philosophy, theology, criticism, and even in politics and sociology, and an extended monograph on Spinoza,) three great works summing up the thought and study of his life, namely, "Types of Ethical Theory" (1885), "A Study of Religion" (1888), and "The Seat of Authority in Religion" (1890). Each work is unique in its kind. The first is the most powerful and competent reply that has been made to the advocates of the Utilitarian and

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Determinist theories of morals. The second takes up the ethical position of the first and extends it to a vindication of Theistic belief incomparable, in my view, in force and scope. The third combines with a restatement of the grounds of Theism the most trenchant criticism in literature of the Roman Catholic and Protestant positions, and an examination of the original documents of Christianity abreast of the most advanced Continental scholarship.

To religious inquirers at a certain stage probably the most illuminating and helpful of all Martineau's writings is "The Seat of Authority," and it is less weighted with the technical language of philosophy than the

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"Types" or the "Study." But it has not the concentrated unity of the prior essays. And, distinguished as was the critical scholarship of Martineau, it is not of the same authority as his philosophical thinking. Many will go with him the whole way in his great Theistic argument, yet part company with him sharply in his New Testament criticism. To such a man, for example, as the late Richard Holt Hutton, the "Types" and the "Study" seemed almost perfect arguments, while he could not fail vehemently to dissent from many chapters in "The Seat of Authority." Tennyson, too, enthusiastic about the "Study of Religion," was deeply disappointed by the later

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work. The most commanding strength of the great teacher was undoubtedly concentrated in the "Study of Religion." That is his supreme positive contribution to religious philosophy. While I personally go with him in much in his last great volume from which many will dissent, I must still hold "A Study of Religion" to be his greatest constructive contribution to human thought.

Believing, as I do, that in these great chapters Martineau has laid down indestructibly the lines on which the highest and truest religious thinking of the twentieth Christian century must proceed, I have willingly agreed to the republication of my humble restatement of the main elements

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of the argument. To read and digest "A Study of Religion" demands not only a considerable leisure, but a familiarity with philosophical literature and terminology somewhat beyond that common to the average culture of our times. I want to help a few earnest men and women who may shrink from the high task of studying the "Study" for themselves, to follow some of its reasoning and assimilate some of its results. If a sprinkling of these few should proceed from the perusal of my simple pages to the pages of the philosopher himself, I shall feel myself the more richly rewarded.

It will be seen that Martineau based his argument for God on

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two chief foundations, the demand of the human understanding for a Living Cause behind phenomena, and the demand of the human conscience for a Living Righteousness behind the moral law. In a little book of my own, mainly based upon his teachings, "God and the Soul," I was led to add a third argument to these, namely, the perception by the emotional nature of man of a Living Love behind things sublime and beautiful—an intuitive sense of a Divine Presence in Nature such as that of which Wordsworth is the prophet. It seems justifiable and not unimportant to record that, in the last conversation which I was privileged to hold with the great

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teacher (in February, 1897), he gave a most generous and cordial recognition to this contention, asserting that in his view the argument from this intuition was of parallel force and rank to the arguments from causality and conscience.

With a reverence and gratitude which words cannot measure to him whose thinking has illuminated all my path, I send forth this booklet as a lowly tribute to his memory.

RICHARD A. ARMSTRONG.

Liverpool,
Feb. 2, 1900.

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MARTINEAU'S "STUDY OF RELIGION:"

An Analysis and Appreciation.

I.

Introductory.

After the appearance of Dr. Martineau's "Types of Ethical Theory," in the year 1885, there were those who awaited the second *Magnum Opus* * of the great prophet-philosopher with an eagerness which it would be difficult to exaggerate. Since his voice had been withdrawn from the pulpit which he adorned with so splendid a power, Dr. Martineau had from

* "A Study of Religion, its Sources and Contents." By James Martineau, D.D., LL.D. Oxford: Clarendon Press. 1888.

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time to time thrown into the whirlpool of controversy essays or addresses which called back the combatants to the supreme issues of Faith and Unfaith. He whose name comparatively young men remembered to have heard pronounced, not without tones of apprehension, as that of a somewhat rash questioner of accepted truths, and that even by men who claimed to be in the forefront of theology, had now for a score of years held, in the estimate of ever-widening numbers, the post of chief advocate of a philosophical Faith against the pleas of an agnostic Scepticism daily growing in confidence and volume. But, save in the College Class-rooms, the defence had hitherto been conducted through isolated pamphlets and articles. There was a deepening impatience for a com-

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plete and consolidated utterance which should present to all the world the reasons why a scholar of culture unsurpassed, a philosopher of profundity by many deemed unparalleled, still clung to the belief that there was a Heavenly Father to hearken to the prayer of his old age, a God to side with righteousness in the conflicts of the nations and the centuries. The grounds for giving the "Types of Ethical Theory" priority to the "Study of Religion" were afterwards amply elucidated in the latter work. But it is undeniable that disappointment widely prevailed that the author had not first secured the publication of his argument on what was felt to be the superior topic, the supreme problem of Theism itself. There was a tremor of apprehension lest the well-worn brain should not

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retain the marvel of its subtlety or the pen the miracle of its eloquence through another tale of years. And the thanksgiving in many hearts when, already well launched on his ninth decade, the great thinker at last put forth this book, was not less fervent than many a thanksgiving for the victories of armies or for return from the gates of death.

The pages of "A Study of Religion" proved to embrace a discussion which is exactly defined by the title. They comprise exactly that,—a study of Religion; they seek and find its sources in the intellectual and moral constitution of man; they unfold its essence—held to be the belief in a Living God directing the universe and sustaining moral relations with mankind, and its further outcome—including the belief in the immortality of man.

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The felicitous partnership of typical Philosophy and typical Piety which presided for so many years over Manchester New College* in the time preceding Dr. Martineau's own principalship is secured against all possibility of oblivion in the beautiful dedicatory words which stand at the threshold of the temple:

In memory of an unbroken friendship through thirty years' companionship in Duty and in Study with JOHN JAMES TAYLER, and of the quickening influence of his ripe scholarship and tender Piety, these Volumes, prepared at his desire and animated by his fellowship of spirit, are affectionately dedicated to the Pupils whom we sought to help on their way to Wise and Faithful Life.

* An institution dedicated to "Free Teaching and Free Learning" in Theology, apart from the inculcation of particular doctrinal opinions—now Manchester College, Oxford.

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It is as one of those rarely privileged pupils that I venture to put forth these chapters.

The Preface (running to a dozen pages) opens with an anecdote recording the chagrin of an unnamed "English Positivist," when Mr. Fiske, the brilliant author of "Cosmic Philosophy" appeared as the prophet of individual immortality. And the anecdote introduces the contention that *all* metaphysics—all thinking, that is, "about the origin and the end of things"—inevitably lead to religious belief. And so we are brought face to face at once with the great question whether, as Comte would have it, we are to confine all intellectual inquiry to the facts and "happenings" which come under our actual observation, or whether the *causes* and ultimate *issues* of facts and

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"happenings" are also a fair field of inquiry.

It is needless to say that Dr. Martineau uncompromisingly vindicates the latter view; and, indeed, he presses relentlessly the contention that you cannot even *think* of a *phenomenon*, without assuming a permanent reality, which is *not* a phenomenon, behind it.* *Causality* and *Right* are the unescapable groundwork respectively of *natural* and *moral* phenomena. And these two are the impregnable basis of the Belief in God.

Those who were deeply stirred by the eloquent Theistic argument of Professor Fiske, in his two well-

* "The old Vedântists held that there could be nothing objective or phenomenal, unless there was something real beneath it, in comparison with which anything else might be called unreal, that is, phenomenal. Thus even our unreal world could not exist unless there was at the back of it a something real."—*Max Müller*, "Auld Lang Syne," second series, p. 102.

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known Harvard Addresses,* must feel a wondering interest in the logic with which Dr. Martineau presses on him the acknowledgment of the validity, even in Evolution days, of the argument from Design; and will, perhaps, feel a little ashamed that their own vision was not keen enough to see that Fiske must either give up the "teleological meaning," "the dramatic tendency" which he finds in nature, "the mighty goal," and "the glorious consummation" towards which, to his view, all things move, or else frankly admit a "design" of God, a divine "purpose," a rational and intending thought, working from the first till now. We would only suggest

* "The Destiny of Man viewed in the Light of his Origin," and "The Idea of God as affected by Modern Knowledge." To these must now be added the three essays comprised in the volume, "Through Nature to God" (Macmillan, 1899).

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that Fiske seems to us, where he shrinks from applying terms of design and purpose to God, to have his gaze fixed on the *limitations*, the necessities for *contrivance* and *management*, which cling so closely to every actual design or purpose of man, and to be moved by the desire to free God from the suspicion of subjection to any like conditions.

Dr. Martineau apprehended that these volumes would "variously conflict with the prevailing opinions and tendencies of the time." "Possibly," he adds, "there may yet be a minority among persons accustomed to reflect on the questions here discussed, who may find in them the satisfaction of fellowship, if not some clearing and confirmation of conviction; and be encouraged, through mere force of sympathy, to cherish and vindi-

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cate the deep and simple pieties on which the sanctity of life depends."

There proved indeed to be no small number whose sympathy and gratitude were kindled by so noble and potent a vindication of a reasoned faith in a God Supreme and Holy. In these articles we hope to discharge the humble function of placing before others, who may not be prepared at once to confront all the array of subtle argument marshalled by the veteran author, yet now that he is gone would fain know somewhat of his teachings, some account of his main conclusions in what we account his greatest work, and the road by which they are reached.

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II.

What Is "Religion"?

Dr. Martineau at the outset clears the ground by recalling to what he deems their proper and historical significance certain great terms now too loosely used in religious controversy. The word "Religion" itself is to stand for "belief in an Ever-living God, that is, in a Divine Mind and Will ruling the Universe and holding moral relations with mankind." Be it noted, however, in passing, that on a subsequent page the right of the Positivist homage to "the nobles and martyrs of history" to call itself a "*religion* of humanity" is passed without

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challenge. But taking Religion to stand broadly for belief in God, Dr. Martineau reminds us further of the sharp line drawn by our older writers between *Natural* Religion, derived from reflection on the physical and moral world, and *Supernatural* Religion, gained by some immediate communication from God. Still seeking to lay out his terminology by broad and clear definition, he points out that the term "Religion" covers certain beliefs secondary to its central affirmation, while the term "Theism" stands for the primary belief alone, and "Atheism" for its rejection or its absence.

Recent writers, however, have not found this simple nomenclature adequate to their arguments. For while an older school of writers saw in Theology and Religion the intellectual and

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emotional aspects of the same thing, inseparable as the convex and concave sides of a surface, their successors contend that the religious emotion may be fully developed altogether apart from any proper theological affirmation whatever. And it is indeed true that of the three kinds of enthusiasm which are found in all the highest developments of Religion, wonder at the order impressed by God upon the universe, admiration of the beauty issuing from his will, and reverence for the Divine goodness manifested, the last may really find the same *kind* of object on which to expend itself in a merely human world as in a world which is God's; because human goodness is of the same kind—however different in degree—as that which believers in God revere in Him. Nay, writers such as the

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brilliant author of "Natural Religion" find the enthusiasm of scientific wonder and of artistic admiration little different from that of moral veneration, and so reduce Religion to "habitual and permanent admiration." This distinguished essayist—whom we lost a few years subsequently to Dr. Martineau's criticism—goes further still; he claims the epithet of "Theism" for a view of the world which empties it of all sign of the God causal and moral recognised by believers of an older type, even identifying the mere flux of phenomena, which is all he knows, with the august and transcendent God. And yet Professor Seeley comes to this not without much confusion, for what is to him on one page *identical* with God, appears on another as the *manifestation* of God. Dr. Martineau

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charges the famous professor with confounding two issues which are wholly distinct, the issue whether there is any permanent causal power behind the ever-shifting scene of outward nature, and the issue whether the changes of nature proceed by uniform law or by miracle. There is no *antagonism*, as Seeley seems to suppose, between law in nature and God behind nature; but there is a most momentous *antithesis*, which Seeley appears to ignore, between the changing scene of nature and the unchanging God from whose power those changes spring.

But the relentless critic has not yet done with the author of "Natural Religion" and the mischief wrought by his very original use of words. If "Theist" stands to the Cambridge Professor simply for one who recognises some order

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in the universe, "Atheist" is reduced in his mind to stand for one who denies or ignores such order. But as no one deliberately makes intellectual denial of all order in the sequence of phenomena, the term can only be retained at all by attaching it to men whose *practical temper* seems to imply an inadequate sense of the uniformity of law, such as the man who bumptiously defies the powers of nature, the man who is too poor spirited to trust them, and the man who is purely cynical, and drifts for lack of any moral anchorage. But while the last of these moods is not without some atheistic colouring, Dr. Martineau regards the dubbing of the two former tempers atheistic as the *reductio ad absurdum* of an indefensible use of an old group of terms in new senses.

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The struggle to maintain the nomenclature of Theism without its faith, and thus to make the least of the differences dividing those who still pray to God from those who know not so much as whether there be any Holy Ghost, is touching in the man whose theistic convictions have died away, generous in the man in whom they still have the glow of life; but none the less it is unavailing and misleading. Are we asked to recognise wonder at order and admiration of loveliness, without any goodness to revere, as an adequate Religion?

It is impossible: homage to an automaton-universe is no better than mummy-worship would be to one who has known what it is to love and trust, and embrace the living friend. In short, a human soul so placed would itself be higher than

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aught it knows within immensity, and could worship nothing there without idolatry.

And even if to the wonder and the admiration we add the moral reverence which the Comtist pays to the good and great of our own race, or to our own ideal possibilities, the "Religion" obtained is but a culture of "Broken gods," or the dream of a perfection which has not and may never have any actual realisation.

Modern "culture" and the old faith cannot then thus be set at peace together; and it is vain to invite one who has ever risen to conscious spiritual communion with the Father to be content with the mere language of theology imported into anti-theological belief. Dr. Martineau still finds the *essence* of Religion in "the belief and worship of Supreme Mind and Will

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directing the universe and holding moral relations with human life"; while the corollaries of that primary belief will also find a place under the category of Religion.

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III.

From Ethics to Religion.

Thus far we have been engaged upon that section of the Introduction which asks the question, "What is Religion?" The next section, which is replete with fine thought and noble phrases—phrases which could have issued from no other mint—meets the query, put by so many when the earlier Treatise was announced, "Why Ethics before Religion?"

The answer is direct and simple. Moral rules are not dependent, in the author's view, on religious conviction, while the sense of duty is itself a leading source of belief in God.

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The mind of man *feels* and *thinks* and *wills*. We suffer, we know, we choose. The first element in this threefold spiritual faculty could not by itself originate religion. The first two elements, without the third, might do so, if we are to admit to the rank of Religion the recognition of a "*thinking Necessity*," an Intellectual Power controlling Man and Nature, but neither exercising any choice itself among diverse possible courses of action nor conceding faculty for such choice to us. But our own sense of ability to choose between higher and lower lines of conduct, which inward sense is the subject-matter of the science of Ethics, reveals to us a like prerogative in the Supreme Power which is over all, and an unswerving preference on the part of that Almighty Will for the

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higher rather than the lower. And it is this perception, that kindles Religion to its brighter glow, and raises its significance to august proportions. Therefore we do well, in philosophical investigation, to take the ascending path from Ethics to Religion rather than travelling in the opposite direction.

The belief in God, with the consciousness that to this line of conduct he attaches pleasure, and to that line pain, could not of itself create the sense of Duty, but only define for us the path of Prudence, for the sense of Duty is a sense of *obligation* independently of any profit and loss account to ourselves; and that only comes when we are aware of an inward *commandment* to do right uttering itself within the sanctuary of our own spirits. But while a Religion,

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stripped of its ethical element, could thus never create that element, we well know that strong ethical feeling often exists where there is no definite religious belief, and that that which we call *character* is produced by it in men who have no assurance that there is any God to sympathise with the moral preferences which guide them.

Are we to conclude, then, that Ethics and Religion have nothing to do with each other? The reply to this question has already been indicated. Dr. Martineau proceeds to elaborate it in a series of paragraphs of brilliant eloquence and wonderful power.

1. The ethical sense gives birth in our minds to the conception of an "*ought to be*" beyond anything *that is*. This *ought* is a very curious fact. It reveals to us an

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ocean of *possible* lying round and encompassing the island of the *actual*. It is not *information*, but *commandment*, and introduces us to another Mind before which we bow in instinctive homage—a Mind stored with the same moral order as our own, and the evident Source of that order in ourselves. Duty at once takes on another aspect. "The tremulous purpose has an infinite Ally. The self-strain is exchanged for self-surrender." Heart and conscience are assured of "boundless affinities and a communion unseen."

2. If, when we have once tasted this assurance, reflection leads us to the conviction that it is after all an illusion, a vain dream of a Friend who has no real existence, then, indeed, we are thrust back into an estate worse than the first. Having once looked outside our-

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selves for corroboration of the deliverances of our moral nature, and turning now in unbelief from God, we are necessarily driven to seek *something else* as that which constitutes a spring of action right; and we shall inevitably find, or think we find, that *something* in the resulting happiness or pleasure, and we are doomed to Hedonism—the theory that pleasure is the highest good—of some sort, vulgar or refined.

3. But if, when we have once apprehended an "infinite Ally," that apprehension brightens in us to an assured conviction, Conscience is for ever kindled into Love, and a force of incalculable power is added to the inward element propelling us to pure and noble life.

4. Nor is it only that Conscience finds a Living Friend upon

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its side. The recognition of the law of righteousness as divine at once assures us that, as gravitation is true of all the matter in the furthest heavens, and the spectrum reveals throughout unimaginable distance the like elements to those which make up Earth, so this law of righteousness carries its sublime prerogative through all the spiritual worlds within the realm of God.

The rule of right, the symmetries of character, the requirements of perfection, are no provincialisms of this planet; they are known among the stars; they reign beyond Orion and the Southern Cross; they are wherever the universal Spirit is; and no subject mind, though it fly on one track for ever, can escape beyond their bounds. Just as the arrival of light from deeps that extinguish parallax bears witness to the same ether there that vibrates here, and its spectrum reports that one chemistry spans the interval, so does

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the law of righteousness spring from its earthly base and embrace the empire of the heavens the moment it becomes a communion between the heart of man and the life of God.

This increase of scale in the moral realm is no small gain. It is no mean augmentation of the attraction of holiness to the human heart. And not only throughout space, but throughout time is the law now felt to prevail. Not only infinity, but eternity as well is felt to fall within its dominion. How can the spirit fail, under so sublime an inspiration, to rise to a loftier reverence and a more intense ambition, to realise a holier mode of being?

Is there any enthusiasm of goodness that can be excessive or unnatural in those who realise what it is to be, in very truth, "Children of God"? If, as a native of Tarsus, the Apostle could not

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help saying with a glow of pride that he was a "citizen of no mean city," how is it possible, without a flush of higher joy, for anyone to know himself a denizen of the city and commonwealth of God—a community whose service is simple righteousness, and whose patriotism inextinguishable love of perfection?

5. Moreover, the transference of Ethics to this transcendent scale awakens in us a demand to find all natural law controlled by the moral idea. We crave to see in God's distribution of pain and pleasure among his creatures a machinery subserving moral ends. And in realms of joy or suffering vast and many the facts of the physical world answer to the expectation thus quickened in us. And if in other realms we fail to discern such correspondence, we must not think that this invalidates the moral sense in its own proper sphere. Yet

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the instinctive demand for ethical justice throughout the apportionments of providence adds, in Dr. Martineau's opinion, enormous force to that inference from the eternity of the moral law which has already led the individual who finds that law within him to deem himself immortal. It is the demand for a future which shall adjust the ill-balance of men's receipts to their deserts which, according to Dr. Martineau, supplies the chief *religious* element to the doctrine of a future life. We confess that we do not find it easy to drape this "demand for compensation" in a religious robe. The sore puzzle of the unmerited suffering of good men, and of the *unmoral*, yet sentient creatures of God, cannot, we think, thus be solved. We prefer to feel after some deeper interpretation of the

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dark and grievous problem, and to believe that more brightly illuminated minds would discover a reconciliation of the sorrows of the world with the loving-kindness of the All-wise without drawing on the unlimited credit of the unseen Heaven.

We have thus seen how intimate and manifold Dr. Martineau believes the mutual influence of ethical feeling and religious conviction to be. If we are persuaded that there is an Infinite and Eternal God who, loving us, commands us to do rightly, we shall draw from that persuasion an inspiration and a strength which nothing else could give us. But do we know that there is a God? Can we know it? May it not all be a dream, an illusion, the *phantasmagoria* of a fevered fancy? There are great philosophers who deny

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the possibility that we should know this thing, or, for the matter of that, really know that there is any external world about us. Unless we can break the spell which these reasoners lay on reason, all talk of Religion, in the sense of knowing God, is vain. To the discussion of the Philosophy of Nescience, accordingly, so prolific of modern Agnosticism, Dr. Martineau devotes his next series of chapters. The discussion is one of extreme subtlety, and, difficult enough to follow even in its extended form, would be impossible adequately to epitomise. We shall, however, endeavour so far to summarise the important Book on "The Limits of Human Intelligence," that without treading its intricate by-ways, whence he would indeed be likely to emerge with "bleeding feet," the reader may

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be possessed of those general results without which the next Book —that on "Theism"—would be bereft of its proper introduction and support.

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IV.

Can We Really Know?

In the Book which follows the noble Introduction Dr. Martineau boldly confronts that profoundest of all forms of scepticism, the doubt of the veracity of our own faculties. "Seeing is believing," says the unphilosophical Philistine. "Seeing is no ground whatever for believing," says the Kantian philosopher. And the philosophers with whom Dr. Martineau here undertakes to deal ask what possible ground we can have for really believing anything whatever that we do believe. We are conscious, indeed, of certain feelings which we assume to

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be impressions from an outward world, or from the memory of our own past, or from the action of God upon us. But if it once occurs to us that perhaps there is in reality nothing whatever beyond our own feelings, how can we argue ourselves back into believing again, without misgiving, what those feelings *seem* to report? Ordinary men will be somewhat startled to find that a great preacher thinks it necessary to discuss such questions as these before he can justify his faith in God. But this preacher is a philosopher, too; and he has set himself to build an edifice of which no man shall be able to shake the metaphysical foundations. And he finds a much wider incredulity of the possibility of genuine religious than of genuine physical knowledge. And "this despair of religious knowledge

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must be encountered at the outset, for if it be well founded, every step of advance can only take us farther astray; and if it be unfounded, it leaves us, like a victim of the black art, imprisoned within a magic circle, which, though needing but a breath to blow it away, we cannot pass." So we must decide this matter once for all. "We cannot afford either to enter a paradise of fools or to miss any Heaven of the wise, and must pause and guard our steps where the ways divide."

Then follows a discussion with which also it will perhaps seem to the unwary that our teacher might have dispensed. The problem is whether it is really possible to *know* God or the external world, or any propositions relative to them. So Dr. Martineau begins by asking "What *is* 'knowing'"?

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And with careful steps he leads us to the conclusion that it is "a kind of judging," and a kind in which the *real relations* of things are reproduced in thought. To "know" then that we *do* "know," we must first have some real access to a reality outside ourselves. Have we any such access?

In considering this Dr. Martineau travels for a little way side by side with Kant. There are certainly some propositions which we can know to be true. For instance, we certainly know that all the radii of a given circle are of equal length. But then that is no real *knowledge* of any fact outside ourselves; for that is just what we *mean* by a circle; and we are only expressing with special distinctness some part of our own inward idea of a circle. Such judgments as this Kant calls

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"analytical," because they are merely the analysis of something already in our own minds, giving us no new information. But if I say "lead is heavy," I say something more of lead than is contained in its definition. Can I know *that?* If so, it would seem to be real knowledge of the outward world. But when we come to look a little more closely, the philosophers will have it that we shall be baulked; for all, say they, that you really know is that *you* have certain muscular sensations; and that cannot possibly be knowledge *about the lead.* Nor is the case improved if fifty other people have the like sensations. That only amounts to universality of belief in *the minds of men.* It gives no knowledge whatever about *things.* And so, though such judgments, unlike the analytic,

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add an *idea*, and are therefore called by Kant synthetic, they are not contributions to knowledge. Nothing has happened to guarantee that you have access to outward reality. This muscular experience, "though it professes to send me abroad, never really lets me loose from home"—the home of *myself and my own feelings*.

Dr. Martineau then proceeds to discuss Kant's views concerning *mathematical* judgments, and the reason why we are all sensible that in mathematical propositions we get a certainty, a fulness of trust in the truth of the statements "proved," transcending what we reach in other fields of so-called human knowledge. And this leads to a review of Kant's famous theory about the origin of our ideas of Time and Space. How come we by these two unique conceptions—

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conceptions woven into all our thinking and imagining? Kant's doctrine is that they are "forms" native to the structure of our minds, that in the very act of apprehending an object we are by the very law of our thought compelled to think of it as occupying a place in Space, and that in the very act of apprehending an event we are by the very law of our thought compelled to think of it as occupying a period in Time. If we never perceived an object, the conception of Space would never wake up in us. If we never noted an occurrence, the conception of Time would never wake up in us. But the first touch of experience quickens into realisation these latent "forms" of our thought.

Dr. Martineau, with some modification, accepts Kant's doctrine. He gives it the preference to the

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theory of Mill, according to whom Space is on a par with the various attributes of matter, and is gradually learnt by us from our experience of outward objects. But Dr. Martineau places along with Space and Time, as a third idea springing into life in our thought full-armed the moment we move among outward objects, the idea of Cause. The very first *resistance* our movement meets flashes upon us this pregnant conception. And Dr. Martineau further differs from the illustrious German inasmuch as he protests that to trace the origin of these ideas to the very make of our minds, so far from giving just reason to suppose them illusory, affords the strongest presumption that they reflect the reality of things. Kant, on the other hand, having traced up our ideas of Space and Time, the "forms" in which the

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outward world and its history are inevitably conceived, to their spring in our own mental constitution, claims thus to have shown that "Mind makes Nature," *i.e.*, that Nature is purely an ideal fiction of our thought, in vivid antithesis to another school of philosophy, according to which Nature makes Mind, *i.e.*, our minds are the mere camera on which the world of reality throws its various and vivid images.

When from the external world we pass to those objects of our thought which no man even supposes he has ever seen—the Soul, God—the scepticism of Kant and his followers deepens and darkens. All such ideas are simply in ourselves, and can, say these thinkers, by no possibility tell us anything but that we have such ideas; they can guarantee no corresponding

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fact, but leave us the victims of our fancy floating in a shoreless ocean of ignorance about all that is. The general result of the criticism put forward by the Kantian school, says Dr. Martineau, is "that the human being is a casket of faculties and susceptibilities, which coherently treat and interpret their own phenomena, without access to anything beyond."

In the next chapter Dr. Martineau freely admits that Kant's doctrine, if true, would account for the fact that we do believe in a world of Space and Time, and he confesses that if Kant does not convince him that the world we believe in is merely ideal, devoid of any real existence, it is not because he knows any phenomena which would not fit into that theory. It is partly because Kant himself does not carry it out tho-

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roughly, but chiefly because we can find in Kant's argument no reason why we should doubt the veracity of our own faculties.

We need not follow Dr. Martineau's exposition of the various shades of scepticism characterising Fichte and Schelling, Hegel and Schopenhauer, Helmholtz and Mill. That exposition is followed by a chapter on the Relativity of Knowledge. Philosophers have been found, in ancient schools and modern, to maintain that, however real the outward world and God may be, we can have no guarantee that they in any way are such as we suppose. For all our supposing is dependent on the mental faculties with which we happen to be endowed; and there can be nothing to show us that these faculties are adjusted to the realities with which they fain

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would deal. Here, again, it is in the nature of things impossible to offer any proof that our faculties *are* adjusted to reality. We cannot get outside ourselves, or test the faculties we *have* by some other faculties which we *have not;* and in the end Dr. Martineau is constrained to fall back upon the declaration that he will "trust" his faculties, and "listen to no proposals to think otherwise" than according to the ways of thinking given to him.

We believe our great philosopher to be absolutely justified in this refusal. Only by such refusal have sanity and common-sense a chance. Yet we cannot conceal from ourselves that such refusal is no logical answer to the sceptic. We believe that the true weapon for the believer in all such conflicts as those dealt with in this Book is

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an *argumentum ad hominem*. "No; we cannot prove these things which all men believe. But *you* believe them as much as we do. *You*, Immanuel Kant, believed in a warm bed and a daily tramp round the suburbs of your town, and so kept your feeble body alive eighty years; you, Arthur Schopenhauer, believed in a very comfortable dinner, and liked it hot; you, all of you, *act* on the belief in an outward world, without doubt or question; you believe in it, and cannot escape believing in it. And then, as for certain beliefs of a sublimer scope, they, too, rest on faculties from which we cannot escape, inherent necessities of our nature." But of that, more by-and-by.

Then follows a splendid section on Spencer's doctrine of the Unknowable, which, however, we must pass by in order to hasten on.

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V.

The World-Maker.

Having vindicated the faculties of the human mind from the charge of incompetence laid against them by that absolute scepticism which, consistently and persistently carried out, would corrode all science and dissolve all orderly life, Dr. Martineau, strong in the resolution to "trust" these faculties, proceeds to the main part of his great undertaking. That undertaking is nothing less than to show that our consciousness of our own will constrains us to ascribe the universe to a Will akin to our own as its Source, and that the action of our own con-

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science reveals to us a Supremely Righteous as its Inspirer; and further, that he whose Will is the Source of the universe, and he whose Holiness is the Inspiration of our conscience, is one and the self-same God.

Two-thirds of the prior of Dr. Martineau's two volumes is occupied with the first of these great arguments; and this mass of reasoning is embraced in a single chapter, entitled "God as Cause."

Will the reader be surprised to learn that the chapter opens with a protracted discussion of the question what we mean by "Cause"? A little reflection suffices to show in how loose a way we are apt to use the word. Sometimes we speak of a *thing* as a cause, as, for example, when we say that the sun is the cause of the summer heat. At other times,

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we speak of some occurrence, some "happening," some *phenomenon* as a cause, as when we declare that the clearing away of the clouds is the cause of the dazzling light. Again, we speak of a *force* as a cause, as when we pronounce gravitation to be the cause of the fall of the rain or the flow of the tide. But in all these cases we use inexact language, for our real meaning involves more than any of these modes of expression would imply. A *thing* only seems to be a cause, because of some *power* of which it is the vehicle or conductor. It is the thrill of undulatory light reflected from the moon that leads us to call her the cause of our seeing; she "*causes*," not by merely *being*, but by *shining*. Nor was any one ever really satisfied with a phenomenon as the alleged cause of any event. The drifting

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away of the clouds from before the moon's face would not *cause* us to see her if there were no light in her, or if we had no eyes. Moreover, we want to know the cause of the alleged cause itself: *what made* the clouds drift away. And even a force alone is not a cause. What is the cause of my black eye? Do you say a stone hitting my face? But stones do not hit men's faces indiscriminately. *What determined the stone's course in that direction rather than any other?* Mill and others have tried hard to get rid either of the idea of cause altogether, or of the idea of power as essential to the idea of cause. Mill insisted that all that men mean by causality is the "invariable sequence" of one phenomenon on another. But we want to know *what makes* that sequence invariable. We cannot

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get out of believing that there is *power* passing out of the one phenomenon into the other. Finally, Dr. Martineau concludes that to the full idea of cause it is essential that there be *permanent power passing through phenomena.*

Thus much is involved in the very conception of cause. But from an unexpected source a flood of light is poured out upon this idea. There is one kind of cause, at any rate, of which we have *immediate knowledge.* This is nothing else than our own conscious will. My very earliest activity reveals to me that the *Self which I am* can put forth force, and that that force is met and antagonised by force put forth from *some other.* If my force were *not* met and antagonised, I should not know that I was putting forth force. It is only when my force is

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resisted that it becomes conscious, and involuntary spontaneity gives way to voluntary effort. And so, by one flash of revelation, I become aware of *my* will as a cause—a conscious putter-forth of force—and of *somewhat other* putting forth force to compete with mine; and I know that that other putter-forth is also Will. The individual infant and the infant race alike show this intuition in its pure and unadulterated clearness. The baby striking his fist against the table, and the savage battling against the storm, alike realise that they are met and antagonised by that which is *living*. Adult and instructed man may "put away childish things." But he goes wrong and lands in endless confusion if he tries to get rid of the *aliveness* of the innumerable forces that beat and blow through the

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universe of worlds. This supreme fact of Will as the determinant of all forces "is in truth the ground of that *fellow feeling* with Nature which philosophy, deluded by its own abstractions, rashly surrendered to the poet, but will have to beg back again, whenever it returns into living relations with reality."

To Dr. Martineau, then, those vast and sublime generalisations of phenomena which we call Laws of Nature are so many distinct permanent volitions, settled desires acting themselves out in the history of the universe, originating in the Will which is the supreme First and Enduring Cause. And if science is gradually demonstrating the interchangeability of the "Forces" which play through Nature, it is because these Forces are in fact the activ-

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ities of the one Will-Power, displaying itself in different guises according to the diverse kinds of molecular motions which it imparts to the substance of the worlds. All the great discoveries of modern physics and chemistry fall into this conception with perfect adaptation and beautiful exactitude.

But although the strict scrutiny of our own laws of thought compels us to ascribe all that happens to some cause, and to identify cause with Will, and so presents to us a mighty World-Maker and World-Sustainer as the Basis of all being, it is as well to check this argument from first principles by an argument from the actual facts of the world, and to see whether these two arguments tally. If they agree, that will be the proving of the sum.

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So Dr. Martineau sets to work to find out whether the constitution of the world and its inhabitants *looks as if* they were the production of Will. And to test that he asks, What are the characteristics of the working of Will? What are the signs of a deliberate and conscious intention, the marks of a procedure that has a purpose? They are chiefly three —*Selection, Combination, Gradation.* Any one who is seeking to bring about some end *selects* his means with discriminate care; *combines* together simultaneously means that will help one another; and takes up *in succession* means that are *steps* (Gradation) towards the end in view. In the working out of the world do we find Selection, Combination, and Gradation?

We must go to the students of Nature for our facts; and it is

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chiefly in biology that we shall find the facts which will either prove our sum or lead us to question the answer to the world-problem given above. "For only living beings can be objects of purpose, good and evil, the better and the worse having no other seat." Do we then in organic nature find those three marks of *intention* which will confirm our *à priori* theory that Will is the source of the world and all that therein is?

1. Are there indications of *Selection?* Why, with the prefix "Natural," that is the very term which modern biologists have hit on to describe the process governing the production of the tribes of living creatures. Only, Darwin and his followers, under the term "Natural Selection," put forward a theory in which what is relatively

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accidental plays a dominant part. The doctrine of Natural Selection lays it down that the parent generates a progeny, among which one or more may chance to have some accidental variation which is favourable to their survival and to their becoming parents in their turn; that among the progeny of these again one or more may chance to intensify this favourable variation; and that so, in the course of a long chain of generations, a species is produced which by this favourable variation spreads and flourishes, while all who have missed this lucky inheritance gradually die off and disappear. So that the *Selection* is an *automatic, self-acting* selection, quite independent of any antecedent *purpose* to produce the species which ultimately results. Dr. Martineau argues from the doctrine of

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chances—with the innumerable varieties which, if left to itself, it would bring about,—from the absolute disappearance of all trace of the unsuccessful competitors, from the insufficient security (on the chance hypothesis) for the conservation of the new species when once reached, and from the want of geologic time sufficient for the theory, that this cannot be a complete account of the radiation of the primeval ascidian into the countless forms of actual life now crowded upon the earth; and then marshals a brilliant array of instances of selection towards which, if he be right, Nature must have been pressed by some more determinate power than the lottery.

2. Having accepted from Darwin the principle of Selection, only transferring it from the accidental to the intentional, Dr. Martineau

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betakes himself to the search for instances of the *Combination* of means in the organisation of the world of living things. These he easily finds in Cuvier's law of the "correlation of organs," a law resting on a mass of facts so overwhelming that from a single bone of a fossil animal naturalists will construct the whole organism without mistake. Nature *combines* means towards the end in view so systematically that the teeth, the vertebræ, the limbs, the hide, and all the other parts of a given beast seem to be chosen with a view to the special mode of life which it is to lead; and you never have an animal's teeth adapted to tear its prey while its legs are adapted to run away, or its eyes adapted to discern its food at a distance while its limbs are only fit to bring it up to a meal that is lying close at

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hand. And if this Combination characterises the putting together of the parts of an individual animal, it also characterises the mutual adaptation of the structure of the flower and the insect, which is to be the instrument of its fertilisation, as well as many other complicated relations linking in one purpose organisms whose lives are otherwise wholly independent of each other.

3. *Gradation*, too, is abundant in the organic world. Different and otherwise disconnected organisms subserve the successive stages in the carrying out of many of the plans of Nature. The given end is attained through a *train* of independent means. Indeed, Nature seems always working on towards climax after climax, each in its turn the goal in some long road, yet each again the path towards

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other goals beyond. All inorganic Nature is a pathway of forces working towards the consummation of that which we call Life. The rocks, the seas, the circumambient atmosphere are the prior requisites which make possible the seaweed, the green herbage of the earth, the great forest, the fragrant flower, the delicious fruit. These in themselves are ends; yet also means. For without them air could be filled with no buzzing and twittering life; the surface of our globe could give no support to beasts and creeping things; the sea would be empty of the vast shoals which keep all its depths alive. The plants furnish the great laboratory which prepares the food for these; "only that, unlike our chemists' apparatus and processes, their experiments are all silent, their alembics all sweet,

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their products the grace and beauty of the world, and their very refuse a glow of autumn glory." And all this conscious life, itself an end, is in turn, in a thousand ways, the means towards *human* life. And finally within the scope of this last product of the great plan, the appetites, the affections, the sentiments, in ascending scale, step after step, lead up to the final realisation of the ideal of the conscience. So that from the lowest motions of mineral and gas in the framework of the globe, the controlling Power builds on and up, stone upon stone, to the godlike being of the prophet and the saint.

Thus our teacher "proves his sum"; and by the *a posteriori* path leads us up and back to the confirmation of the deliverance of our *a priori* theory that Intelligent Will is the basis of all the worlds,

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and of their boundless play of interlaced phenomena. We cannot pause on the rebutting argument marshalled against those who would invalidate this powerful contention by adducing blunders in the making of the worlds and their inhabitants; nor can we touch upon the easy charge of "anthropomorphism,"—making a "man-shaped" God,—which objectors bring against such as find Design in the trend of things. The whole of the last hundred and fifty pages of the first volume is within the comprehension of many who would find it difficult to follow the metaphysical discussions in the earlier sections; and the facts of natural history have never been marshalled with a greater charm; nor has Dr. Martineau ever sustained an argument with a more brilliant eloquence.

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The volume closes with an enumeration of the attributes of God which we may deduce from the knowledge thus far gained of Him as the Source of the universe and its contents. "There is One universal Cause, the infinite and eternal seat of all power, an omniscient Mind, ordering all things for ends selected with perfect wisdom." To discover the yet dearer and nobler attributes of God, we must enter the temple of our moral nature and hear the solemn testimony of the voice of Conscience.

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VI.

The Fountain of Holiness.

Even those whose judgment may not be captured by the reasoning in Dr. Martineau's great chapter on "God as Perfection," will surely find their imagination captivated by the extreme spiritual beauty of the argument. This chapter and that devoted to establishing the identity of the God discovered as Cause with the God revealed as Perfection complete the main argument of the work, and bring Book II. to a close, landing us at the end of the first third of the second volume.

As our own Will gives us the clue to God as the universal Cause,

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so our own Conscience reveals to us God as the supreme Holiness: such is the contention to which we are now led on.

In his treatise on "Types of Ethical Theory," Dr. Martineau elaborated the doctrine that each of us has within him by natural constitution an assemblage of possible motives, a great concourse of "springs of action," and that when any two of these wake up in him at the same moment, one urging him to do this, the other urging him to do that, he immediately becomes conscious that the one is *worthier* than the other, and has a *right*, or intrinsic *claim*, to be preferred. And it is possible to classify *all* the springs of action in a man's nature — appetites, passions, affections, and so forth, each one of these great divisions again branching out into several

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members—and to arrange them in a scale of felt worth, from Censoriousness, Vindictiveness, and Suspiciousness at the very bottom, up to Compassion, the highest but one, and Reverence at the very top. And this doctrine, that we do find in our consciousness such a scale of worth, may be accepted even by those, if any, who question the precise arrangement of the scale submitted by Dr. Martineau. Further, even when a lower spring is more vivid and intense in its appeal to us than a higher, we *can*, if we *will*, nevertheless obey the higher. In this power of resisting the stronger, and throwing our own personal causality into the balance on the side of the weaker, consists our greatest distinction from the brutes and our capacity for making *character*.

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Assuming thus much, in the present work, after very brief rehearsal, Dr. Martineau enters on the problem, *whence comes* this Moral Law? *By what authority* is it laid upon us?

A plausible account of this authority is given by those who refer it to the pressure of "public opinion" consolidated throughout society and accumulated in the course of all the generations. That machine-like logician, James Mill, the father of the more mobile John, worked this theory out with the neatest exactitude. According to him there is really after all but one spring of action in any of us, and that is self-love, the desire of personal gratification. But the self-love of all other people unanimously sets up a demand that I shall not indulge my own self-love in such a way as will

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hurt them, and they accordingly make things pleasant for me by praise, or disagreeable for me by blame, according to my observance or otherwise of this demand. And in the end I, who like praise and hate blame, insensibly adopt this demand into my own consciousness, and then take it for a "Moral Law" having some mysterious authority of its own.

Such an explanation Dr. Martineau peremptorily rejects. Even in brutes, much more in man, he finds springs of action which do not set any pleasure before them—witness all that class of motives which we designate "affections." And if self-interest *were* our only possible motive, we should find our interest less in creating a pressure on every one to be kind all round than in encouraging our neighbours to make their own game, so

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that we might be free to make ours also. Moreover, our sense of moral obligation is a wholly *different* feeling from our love of praise and our hate of blame. These may, indeed, often work in alliance with Conscience, but they are not *the same* as Conscience, and they sometimes pull exactly the other way.

Repudiating, then, the theory that our sense of Right is the creature of a "Social Vote," our teacher asks whether it is not rather the Divine working through the Human; and maintains that, just as all Perception is the recognition of something *other* than ourselves which gives us what we feel, so Conscience is the recognition of something *Higher* than ourselves which gives us what we feel. The sense of *Duty* is the consciousness that we *owe* some-

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thing, and that not to ourselves, but to another. It, therefore, implies the existence of a Righteousness (and so of a Righteous One) outside and above ourselves whose Right to command us we instinctively acknowledge.

We would gladly linger over the brilliant exposition of the play of a higher Righteousness upon our conscience. This is exhibited first in the spontaneous energy of spiritual life which flows from the companionship of a good man over characters of lesser altitude—an influence which is much more than mere example. It is no mechanical imitation by the inferior, but an infusion of higher life through all the elements of his being from the quickening touch of one whom he reveres. And of such quickening touch is all human goodness born. But if ordinary men thus depend

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on the hero and the saint for the kindling of nobler character, whence can the redeemers and saviours of mankind themselves draw their inspiration? Only from some Righteous One to whom they in turn lift upward looks. And there must be some glorious sphere of spiritual light in which the loftiest summits of our human kind are bathed, and whence these prophet-peaks gather the glow and radiance with which they shine upon the world. Yet what is this but to say that over the life of man there breathes a Holy Spirit? Dr. Martineau proceeds to draw out the attributes of that Spirit which are implicitly involved in what has gone before; and these he enumerates as chiefly *benevolence* to all sentient beings, *justice* to all moral beings, and *amity*, or, as we would rather term

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it, *friendship*, towards all minds that are in moral kinship with his own.

It remains to show that the Supreme Will recognised as Cause of the World and all that therein is, and the Holy Spirit recognised as the Inspirer of the human Conscience, are not diverse Beings, but one and the self-same God. Three considerations at the outset impel us to this conclusion. In the first place we ourselves are, in our own persons, subjects both of the causal Will and of the moral Law. And the elements in our being which are involved in these two relations are so interfused that it is impossible to refer them to different sources. The human body, above all other material products, bears marks of its origin in the counsels of the creative Intelligence, and is interlinked on every side with

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the physical structure of the world. But we are also moral beings; and it is this body itself, proceeding from the *World-making* God, which gives all the scope and play for the working of the moral faculty infused by the *Holy* God. "Our probation as moral consists in managing ourselves as animal; and he that has devised the trial must have created the test."

Then, again, it is the outer world, made by the Causal God, which awakens to life all those springs of action which Conscience ranges in moral order. The problems of Conscience "are set by the conditions of the world." The moral order and the physical "are organically blended in their real existence," and we should strive in vain to trace the moral order to one Cause and the physical to another.

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And, thirdly, the physical world to a large extent administers the retribution and enforces the discipline required by the moral law. They fit into one plan. The ruined health of the intemperate reveals that one and the same Will gives the command against excess and works the physiological law. "The Divine Causality places itself at the disposal of the Divine Perfection."

But if, indeed, the Holy Spirit, All-just, All-good, All-loving, be that same Power whence flows the universe, and by whose potency the mighty tides of physical force sweep through the worlds, whence the Suffering and whence the Sin that darken the face of heaven? Do *these* look as if a Goodness at one with Power lay at the source of all things? This great inquiry, the problem that has tortured so

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many noble minds, confronts us now and must be faced.

Dr. Martineau sweeps away at the outset the evasion by which it is contended that pain is really not an evil. He sweeps away also the theory unjustly charged upon Descartes, though really held by Malebranche, that the animals are automata, non-sentient machines, a device which would get rid of the difficulty involved in the apparent woes of the infrahuman tribes. He proceeds to divide the pains of sentient creatures into those which are involved in their organisms and those inflicted by their relation to their environment, and in either case shows that these are necessarily involved in the fact of sentiency in any universe which ingenuity can conceive. He frankly avows that their severity and extent may well appal; but he

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holds that, broadly speaking, they *conduce* to the life and happiness of the sentient creation; that we are apt to exaggerate the sorrows of the animal world, partly by concentrating our thought upon them, and partly by investing them with the enhancements of human memory, anticipation, imagination, and reflection, which, in fact, but dimly exist in bird and beast and creeping thing; that the joys of these myriads of sentient creatures immeasurably outweigh their pains; and that that in itself suffices to justify their call into existence by the Divine power, in spite of the drawbacks to their happiness involved in the constitution of the world.

But human Sin, yet more than sentient Suffering, is apt to overwhelm the pious heart with deep shadows of foreboding lest, after

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all, there be no God in Heaven. Can a Righteous God, indeed, preside over a world where passion wreaks its will and infamy rears its head?

Dr. Martineau recalls us to the fundamental facts that *Character* appears to be the supreme good in the eye of the Creator, and that Character is that which is born of *right choice*, and that right choice cannot have play without admitting the alternative of *wrong* choice, and that all Sin—and all the Suffering which springs from Sin—are the issue of this possibility of fatal choosing. Nor could we call God Righteous if He valued aught else more highly than Righteousness—that is, than Character — in men. All, then, that we can demand is that the world be so constructed that humanity shall *tend* to Right-

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eousness — that moral evil shall tend to decay, and moral good shall tend to gather strength. And that such is the structure of this human world, that the forces playing on it and within it are such that *good must win in the end*, that in the strife between good and evil (essential to the production of Righteousness) there is such a poise and balance of forces that the movement is always towards the victory of the good, he shows with consummate and convincing skill. All moral badness, in individuals and in races, tends to weakness. All moral goodness tends to strength. The trend of things is right. Though the good man and the good cause be defeated, it is only for the time. The bad man and the evil cause alone are beaten and crushed for ever. The set of predominant

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power is towards the Kingdom of God; and the reign of the All Holy is vindicated throughout the field of his causal energy.

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VI.

Pitfalls of Philosophy.

The Theism which Dr. Martineau's argument has now established has been reached by two parallel roads —the one traced from the principle of Causality, the other cut along the higher level of the experiences of our Moral Nature. He is not concerned to deny that there are other paths to the citadel of faith. But some of these he would seem to regard as offering but a rugged and uncertain track, while others are but side-walks of the two great main lines already travelled. * Instead of surveying

* See, however, the Preface to these Articles.

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these, therefore, he proceeds to warn us against the danger of two diverging routes, which, turning the one out of the road of Causality, the other out of the road of Conscience, may easily tempt us to deviate from our proper course and lead us very far astray—ending, indeed, in pitfalls which destroy, in the one case, all personal, in the other, all moral relation between man and God.

Accordingly, to the criticism of Pantheism on the one side and Determinism on the other, either of which doctrines sucks the life out of Theism, he devotes Book III—a Book covering nearly half of the second Volume of his work.

The glow and heat of inchoate Pantheism, of Pantheism not yet cooled down in the refrigerator of scientific thought, but molten in pure and lofty passions of the

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spirit, charm us in the poetry of Shelley, in periods of "Professor Teufelsdroeckh," and, according to Dr. Martineau, in the preaching and the praying of Theodore Parker no less. But it is Pantheism in the form of crystallised systems that the philosopher must deal with; and to such we have now to turn.

By way of contrast Dr. Martineau turns first to such Deism as that of the less spiritual among "the English Deists of the Eighteenth Century"—so well described in Mr. Tayler's "Retrospect of the Religious Life of England."* In that school God was conceived as having at a

* "A Retrospect of the Religious Life of England; or the Church, Puritanism, and Free Inquiry," by John James Tayler, B.A., is a perfect model of impartial historical inquiry and statement, originally published in 1845.

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definite time created the universe and so ceased to be solitary, and as having so established it that, like a clock wound up, it would thenceforth "go" of itself without further help from Him; and the universe was conceived as strictly bounded, so that the infinite Being of God stretched far beyond it, and as imperfect, though issuing from a perfect God. But this conception of the relation between the Creator and Creation presents grave difficulties. Why and when did God begin to create? Was there something wanting which He set Himself to repair? If so, He was not always perfect. And how could the world be "set going"? Is not the Divine energy wanted to sustain it and act upon it throughout its career as much as at the start? And can we really say that the universe

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is finite while God is infinite? Are there wastes of Space—or rather wastes that are not even Space—out beyond Creation? And why must we think of the total of Creation as in any sense "imperfect"? Were it not more consonant with highest thought and feeling to deem it the all-perfect Thought of God?

Along these tracks of reflection mark after mark which *differentiated* the world from God slips away from our minds; and we verge towards the doctrine that the infinitude of Creation in time and space and perfection coincides all round with that of the Creator. The Universe is the All; the All is God. The "Pan" is "Theos." We are Pantheists.

The start down this hill—for it is a pit that we have reached, and not a summit—comes of a false

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antithesis—an antithesis of which we certainly cannot acquit Theodore Parker, clear as his Theism is in other passages of his noble writings. The antithesis springs up when we perceive that it will not do to look on the world as a clock *set going;* but that God must work in and through it all the while. This perception became distinct with the change of the stress in scientific study from the mechanical physics of the last century to the chemistry and biology—with their interpenetrating forces—of this. For the *transcendent* God our thought has gradually substituted the *immanent* God; and it has hastily been assumed that in finding God *in* all his works, we dispense with—or get rid of—Him *outside* his works. But Dr. Martineau insists that the antithesis is false, that immanence

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does not exclude transcendency, that we may gladly agree with the Pantheist that there is no atom of the universe which does not quiver always with the Divine force, and in God "live and move and have its being"; while still the reserves of Divine force may infinitely outmeasure the universe in time and space and power.

In a section which displays all the resources of his logic in their most characteristic form, Dr. Martineau exposes the futility of that Pantheistic mode of thought which in the adaptation of created things —especially of animals endowed with instincts—acknowledges an "end," an "aim," an "idea" as governing the processes of development, yet refuses to ascribe that idea or aim to any *Mind* as its subject. All men will acknowledge that when the butterfly deposits

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her eggs on the very leaf of all the forest which will best nurture the grubs that are to be, and perishes after bequeathing the world that legacy, the act irresistibly suggests an *end* or *aim* in view, an *idea* that is by these means to be realised by-and-by; and they will acknowledge further that it is not to be supposed that the *aim* is a conscious one on the part of the insect herself, or that the *idea* is an idea of hers. But, says the Pantheist, you must nevertheless not assume that the aim or the idea is anyone else's. With unrelenting vigour Dr. Martineau insists that the aim and idea *is* some one else's; that a *future* can only cause a *present* in the sense that the conception of that future as something to be aimed at is present already in a controlling mind; and that the

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seat of the idea in question is the Mind of God.

There is deep interest in the excursions on which our philosopher takes us among the Pantheists of various mood, some analysing energy after energy in Nature till they reach the one Universal Power, others, by the inverse path, bringing the Universal Power down till they send it coursing through all the channels of Nature; and the interest becomes profound when it is boldly alleged that, so far from the Personality of God impairing his Infinity (as so many anti-theists allege), it is only by insisting on his Personality that his Infinity can possibly be saved. For a Person is one who can choose between alternatives; and if God had no choice but to make just this world and no other, then He is

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shut between definite bounds, and his Infinity fades out of our thought.

In bidding the Pantheist farewell, there is but one bargain that we are bound to make with him. We may sit gratefully at his feet while with fervent eloquence he discourses on the Divine energies which fill all the courses of the world, bearing the stars along their orbits, flashing in the fires of the sun, darting down the ether wave and plashing on the tinted earth, thrilling five hundred billion times a second in each atom of the solid iron, and massing the single molecule itself as an organ complex as any musical instrument. We may surrender to him the whole region which eye can sweep with telescope or descry with microscope, and worlds unimaginable in vastness and in smallness

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beyond these. But we may not surrender to him our souls. Here, we claim, are free Causes, from which God has deliberately barred out his causality, islands of individual will in the midst of the ocean of universal Will. These must not be immersed in the great flood. Leave us Man confronting God; and in all other creatures that we know, immobile or sentient, we rejoice to recognise the sweep of the Divine will determining them to their places and their destinies.

But we must briefly refer to the other great foe of Theistic faith, the doctrine that all human action is *determined* by inevitable forces outside the human will; that the belief that I *can* and the belief that I *ought* are alike illusions read by me into my interpretation of life without any real warrant in

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my relations to the world and God. The final appeal against that doctrine, so persistent in the schools of philosophy, must always lie to the irresistible consciousness within us that, whatever men may say and whatever they may argue, we *can* choose this course or that, *ought* to choose the one rather than the other, and are *not* inevitably determined by forces beyond the control of our will.

But Dr. Martineau faces the objections raised by one group of thinkers after another, with indomitable patience. We will confine our attention to the remarkable section in which he discusses the difficulty involved in the alleged "Fore-knowledge of Voluntary Actions."

Mr. Buckle and others point out that such human actions as getting married, and even committing

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suicide, can be *predicted* with extraordinary accuracy—not, indeed, that John and Sarah will be married, or that a particular King of Bavaria will drown himself, but that in 1901, for instance, if the price of corn be so much, about so many couples in England will seek the hymeneal altar, and, unhappily, about so many poor fellows will give up the stern battle of life "voluntarily," and face the riddle that lies behind the bars of death. But if these voluntary acts can be fore-known, they must, it is said, be fore-ordained. It cannot be left to the lovers themselves to determine that which is determined already; and their determination is, after all, only another lover's illusion.

It is somewhat surprising that the law of averages should thus have imposed on many minds of

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far subtler calibre than Buckle's; and Dr. Martineau has no great difficulty in showing that a particular event may really be *contingent* (that is, *not yet decided*), although it may be one of a bundle of events in which you are pretty sure that about so many will turn out *this* way and so many *that*. The certainty does not apply to any one of them taken alone; and as applied to the group, the certainty is only approximate—a mere judgment of *probability*. But we certainly should not think of saying that our coachman cannot choose whether he will turn to the right or the left when he gets to Regent Circus, merely because we think it *most likely* that he will turn to the left.

But much more grave is the difficulty involved in *God's* foreknowledge. Dr. Martineau freely

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confesses that if God *knows* beforehand that a man will do a certain thing, it is vain to say that it is within the man's own choice when the time comes whether he will do it or not. If God *knows* that Lord Salisbury will bring in proposals for Conscription after Whitsuntide, then, however much Lord Salisbury deliberates and consults, he certainly *will not be able to help doing it.* But Dr. Martineau fearlessly declares that God *does not know* these things.

God's fore-knowledge throughout the sphere of his own unsurrendered causality is absolute. But in relinquishing to us control over our own conduct, Dr. Martineau believes that the Creator relinquished also fore-knowledge of that conduct. The belief in the Divine knowledge of our own future acts rests chiefly on text-

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ual authority, and was consonant with the narrow, however noble, Hebrew conception of the relation of man to God. But it has, it is suggested, no basis either in philosophy or in piety. The abstention from such fore-knowledge is a self-limitation on the part of God, sustained, like the partial surrender of his causality, that there might be scope for the gift of moral freedom to mankind.

Startled at the first suggestion of so bold a mode of cutting the Gordian knot, we have to confess that reflection lends to this doctrine a wonderful attraction and impressiveness in our eyes.

It lends it an attraction because it so vastly enlarges the marvel of the providence of God. Instead of conceiving God as retaining in his own hands the whole guidance of creation and "knowing the end

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from the beginning" because he knows every step upon the way; we have to conceive Him as knowing the end from the beginning in spite of being blind as regards innumerable intermediate steps. Thus He must so shape all the forces that are, that, in spite of the countless variety of contingencies that may turn up through human agency, the whole shall be prepared for *any* event, and shall so work round again that in the end it shall be well, and the purpose of God shall not be baulked, whatever the deeds of man. Nature, as organised by God, must comprise a *vis medicatrix* by which the disturbing effects of any human act will work themselves out, and the set of things go right in spite of all. Out of evil good must incessantly work by an inherent quality of the universe; trains of effects initiated

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by human effort, though, if right, efficient factors in the universe, must, if wrong, exhaust themselves in a little while, or work back into the pattern purposed and ordained. To us this seems a sublime expansion of the whole scope and sweep of providence.

And the conception is to us profoundedly impressive otherwise. "Thou, God, seeest me altogether," we truly say. But we are no longer to deem that even God sees the moment in our moral life that is coming next. Even He does not know whether I shall yield to that secret temptation at mid-day. Even He is ignorant whether I shall do the thing I know I ought to do to-morrow. He watches with Divine affection and unexhausted interest. To Him, too, it is not a story told, but a drama in the acting, of which He knows

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not the consummation. Behold on what a theatre, before what a Spectator I play my part! If God is watching earnestly to know, how can I do the sin? *

* When these articles first appeared the above passage brought me the gravest remonstrances from thinkers whose views were entitled to high respect. After the lapse of twelve years, however, I am unable to share their disapprobation of Dr. Martineau's position. *If* God voluntarily limits his own causality by conceding to us a free causality of our own, that is, Free Will, I see no reason to shrink from the suggestion that He may in like manner and for the like purpose suffer limits to his own fore-knowledge. In Professor William James's fascinating book, "The Will to Believe" (Longmans, 1897), pp. 180,1, he puts the case in a very striking way. "The belief in free-will," says he, "is not in the least incompatible with the belief in Providence, provided you do not restrict the Providence to fulminating nothing but *fatal* decrees. If you allow Him to provide possibilities as well as actualities to the universe, and to carry on his own thinking in those two categories just as we do ours, chances may be there uncontrolled even by Him, and the course of the universe be really ambiguous; and

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yet the end of all things may be just what He intended it to be from all eternity.

"An analogy will make the meaning of this clear. Suppose two men before a chessboard—the one a novice, the other an expert player of the game. The expert intends to beat. But he cannot foresee exactly what any one actual move of his adversary may be. He knows, however, all the *possible* moves of the latter; and he knows in advance how to meet each of them by a move of his own which leads in the direction of victory. And the victory infallibly arrives, after no matter how devious a course, in the one predestined form of checkmate to the novice's king."

Professor James then supposes the novice to stand for us finite free agents, and the expert for the Infinite Mind planning out his universe and guiding its total of phenomena. The rest of the analogy will easily suggest itself, and it seems to me very perfect and very beautiful. You can only restore fore-knowledge of our acts to God by cutting off the freedom of our wills and shutting us up in a world of determinism.

There is, indeed, *one* desperate expedient left. You may deny the reality of *time*—treat it as a mere illusion of the human mind. The whole problem then vanishes. "Fore-knowledge" is a term without meaning. "Free-will" is so no less, for free-will means *choice*, and choice is a motion of the mind prior in time to action. In fact, time being eliminated from the world

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all reasoning about phenomena necessarily ceases; for it will be found impossible to frame a conception or an argument with regard to them which does not imply time as their condition.

That time is a necessary form of human thought does not, indeed, *prove* its reality. But it does carry with it the implication that to try to reason outside time conditions is to attempt a feat to us intrinsically impossible and inevitably delusive. Be time an ultimate reality or not, we are so made that we shall think *nearer* the ultimate truth of things if we consent to reason within the limits of our intellectual constitution than if we set forth to jump outside our own minds before we begin. Dr. Martineau was a most firm believer in the reality both of time and of space. In a letter to me, dated 1888, he writes: "I am obliged to confess outright that to me Space is the condition of *all* existence; not of *body* only, which shares its dimensions, but of *Soul* also, which, in being a cognitive subject, must have its *objects*, and in its consciousness of a Self must live in antithesis to another than self. I cannot affect to rise above the 'common consciousness' in this matter." Such a view must seem to many extreme. For my own part, I can as little think of Soul as conditioned by Space as of Body not so conditioned.

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VIII.

Shall the Soul Die?

The Fourth and last Book of the great work upon which we are engaged bears the superscription, "The Life to Come." Dr. Martineau admits that it is "by a somewhat abrupt transition" that he passes from the exposition of the grounds of Theism to the inquiry "whether man has any life in prospect beyond his present term of years." But he finds his apology—an apology which few readers will think required—in the pressure of this momentous question on our feeling and in the habitual inclusion of the faith in

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the life beyond within the contents of *Religion*.

He believes that the reason why we consider the belief in Immortality an element of religion, while we do not usually so reckon even the brightest of terrestrial hopes for the individual or for the race, lies in the fact that that ulterior life is apprehended neither in the immediate consciousness by which we know *ourselves*, nor yet by the sensuous perception by which we know *the world*, but lies beyond experience and is withdrawn from vision, and is yet more real than either, because secured in the eternal ground of both.

However powerful are many of the subsidiary trains of reasoning in this Book, the main argument, we fear, will hardly be felt to be so broadly and securely built as

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that which constitutes the body of the work. The philosophical demonstration of human Immortality can, perhaps, never be so completely wrought out as that of God. God *is*; the life to come, so far as each one of us is concerned, is only *to be*. A fact extending through the present and the past has innumerable points of contact with *experience*; a fact lying wholly in the future can have none. The appeal, therefore, which the reasoner can wield is less direct; it is less easy for us to plant our feet on the solid ground of that which *we cannot doubt*. We are persuaded that the *dimness* of our apprehension of the life to come, as compared with the *brightness* of apprehension of the presence of God which is open to us, is not without its spiritual uses. Hope may be a more divine

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training for character than sight. In proportion to the vividness of our Sight of God—that Beatific Vision—the outline of our Hope eternal is apt to grow in clearness and in fulness.

But if Dr. Martineau's philosophy cannot, after all, avail to turn Hope into Sight, or Filial Trust into Scientific Knowledge, it does, at any rate, suffice to dispose effectually of alleged difficulties in the way of our faith in Immortality advanced by the Physiologist and the Metaphysician. In the first Chapter of the Book the physiological objections are met and overturned; in the second, those issuing from the metaphysical schools receive like treatment; in the third, the positive claim of the doctrine of our personal Immortality on our acceptance is based on the vati-

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cinations of the Intellect and Conscience.

"The question," says Dr. Martineau, "of a Life to come centres in the interpretation of Death, as affecting the individual." What has the Physiologist to say?

His fundamental conception lies in the relation of *function* to *organ*. The function of an organ is that which the organ has to do; and when the organ is dissolved, it is vain to look for the function to continue. The lungs are an organ whose function is the oxygenisation of the blood. If, then, the lungs are gone, there will be no oxygenising of the blood. And when all the organs of the body are bereft of organic power, all the processes of the body cease, and it is dead. And so, if thought, affection, and character are functions of any physical organs, if

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these organs *do* the thinking and the loving and the willing as the heart does the pumping, the discussion is at an end; the dissolution of the organs is the cessation of the conscious life.

But *is*, for instance, thinking a *function* of the brain? On the contrary, the function of the brain is found in certain molecular motions and electrical discharges; and could these be measured and reduced to "foot-pounds," it will be agreed that they would be exactly equivalent to, and exactly account for, the physical energies from which they proceed. It is true that these molecular motions and electrical discharges accompany and are accompanied by the phenomena of consciousness and will. But Professor Tyndall himself is our authority for declaring (what, indeed, none can dispute),

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that the physical phenomena and the mental are dissevered by "a chasm intellectually impassable."

Physiology is incapable of exhibiting thought as a function of any physical organ. It lies not, then, in the mouth of the physiologist to say that thought must cease with the perishing of any physical organ. This is beyond the scope of his valuable science; and, as physiologist, he is destitute of *data* for an opinion on one side or the other.

We cannot follow Tyndall's great antagonist through the exact and powerful process of reasoning by which he liberates conscious life from the liability to a partner's share in the collapse of the physical organs. At every point he seems to us to get the better of an opponent as slipshod in philosophic method as he is brilliant in scien-

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tific rhetoric. And then, taking up the physiologist's own canon, the law that organ *implies* function, he presses the contention that the mental and spiritual organism of man carries with it functions which the service of the physical life are inadequate to exhaust.

But now the Metaphysician, stepping on to the stage from which the Physiologist has withdrawn, asks *what it is* that survives the perishing organism. If you say that it is the Soul, Mr. Tylor and Mr. Spencer assure you that the very idea of such a thing only comes from dreaming of the dead; but they forget to explain why we do not ascribe souls to trees and houses, to pictures and to statues, when we have dreamed of them. The Soul, says Dr. Martineau, is the Self, the permanent centre whence

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our acts come and whose they are—the subject also of the feelings which form the scenery of life, the substance of which our activities and our receptivities alike are the phenomena; and of this Self or Soul we have first-hand knowledge, and we are to conceive it as an Ego set up by the universal Mind "in whose embrace it lives, and which it reflects in its miniature powers."

Can then this Self, this Soul, this Ego, abide as otherthan God for ever?

"No," says one metaphysician; "it has begun, therefore it must cease." "No," says another; "it is finite, and cannot hold its ground amid the infinite." Dr. Martineau holds, however, that the first objection is illegitimately assuming that a rule which holds good in organic life, "whose history consists of a cycle of chemical

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changes," holds good in all other spheres as well. Nor does he allow that there is any reason why the spiritual nature which God has set up out of the resources of his own being may not endure as long as God.

The second objector sustains his *dictum* by appealing to the spiritual beauty which we all recognise in *self*-surrender, *self*-sacrifice, *self*-abnegation, and the like. But the inference is only drawn by a trick of thought. The *self* thus abandoned and slain is itself given up *by another self*, which in that very sacrifice *lives and loves the more;* and the consummation is not an *absorption into* God, but the *harmony of another with* God. The chapter closes with a vigorous protest against the tendency to depreciate *personality*. Of all existences known to us in the universe

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personality is the highest and the holiest.

When Dr. Martineau turns to the positive side of his argument, he does indeed, as we have said, in our opinion, fail to forge so adamantine a chain of reasoning that it is hopeless anywhere to try to break it. Yet he must wield a strong hammer who would do so. Few nobler contributions have ever been made to a spiritual philosophy than the section in which the mighty promise of human intellect is sketched and *time claimed* in which the promise shall have opportunity of fulfilment. The mental endowments of the animals find a sufficient field in the exigencies of the organism which they subserve: the mental endowments of man expand to proportions which fit him for life far transcending his

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threescore years and ten on a patch of Earth. Still more cogent is the argument when transferred from the intellect to the affections which adorn humanity. Are there such boundless capacities of love without a world in which it shall meet the full scope of its glorious satisfaction? Is the love which seeks death from its very devotion to have no apotheosis in which it can live and bless in proportion to its sublime capacity?

Finally, Dr. Martineau renews the plea, which we met on his opening pages, that the Moral Law shall have the seal set on it in some further stage of life than that which closes here. The peace of the saints is indeed, he admits, its own reward; but the facts of human life indicate, in the view of Dr. Martineau, that Conscience does not dispense any

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sentence, but is limited to the warnings and the promises which foreshadow the jurisdiction of a higher Court hereafter. The inward and outward moral adjustments of human life are alike imperfect; and the great lines of human experience indicate with equal clearness that we are in "a morally constituted world *moving towards* righteous ends," and that the *fulfilment* of this idea is not here, "but only the incipient and often baffled tentatives for realising it by partial approximation." "This is what we should expect to see from the first station of an unfinished system; and it irresistibly suggests a justifying and perfect sequel. The vaticinations of our moral nature are thus in harmony with those of the intellectual and spiritual, distinctly reporting to us that we stand in Divine rela-

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tions which indefinitely transcend the limits of our earthly years."

We believe that in this splendid work Dr. Martineau has failed, as the human intellect must ever fail, to set up a logical barrier around the primal faculties of our minds, which he who refuses credit to those faculties cannot break through. We believe, nevertheless, that he is profoundly right, whether as philosopher or prophet, in claiming for those faculties our implicit credence. And we believe that, on the basis of those faculties, no nobler plea than his has ever been constructed for all that makes the universe a temple, and fills the world with hope. Now that the slim and noble figure and the beautiful countenance lit with the very light of heaven have passed for ever from our vision, we can only register our fervent thankful-

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ness that this great teacher was permitted by Him in whose hands are the lives of men to put forth this mighty argument for all that makes the world a temple and the soul a shrine while still, in spite of the load of years, the eye of his spiritual vision was undimmed and his intellect had lost naught of its subtlety or grasp.

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